

Writing in the Workplace COM 313.011 Fall 2025 Course Syllabus

NJ Institute of Technology
COM 313.011

Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 – 11:20
Office Phone: (973) 596-6305

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Classroom: FMH 405
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OFFICE HOURS Fall 2025

Mon 11:35- 12:30 Tues 11:35-12:35 Wed 11:35 – 12:35 Th 11:35-12:35
and by appointment; contact me face to face or by email to set up an appointment.

Prerequisite: completion of HUM 102 with a C or higher.

Required Textbook: The Essentials of Technical Communication, 5th Edition by Tebeaux, Elizabeth and Sam Dragga. Oxford University Press ISBN: 9780197539200

You will need this book to do well in the class. You can buy the book or the electronic e-book, or rent it. We will use it for discussion and for exercises.

Note: the 4th edition has much the same content but different page numbers. Editions 1, 2 and 3 are so different you can't use them.

Course Outline:

Technical Writing is an advanced writing course which combines current theory with actual practice to prepare students for professional writing. Students analyze complex communication situations and design appropriate responses through tasks that involve problem solving, rhetorical theory, document design, oral presentations, writing teams, audience awareness, and ethical considerations, so that their professional communication is clear and concise, with appropriate level of reader awareness.

Some assignments will be submitted on Canvas, others by paper copy in class, by email, or a paper copy under my door, Cullimore 424. Please use Word documents for ease of making comments. Avoid using Google Docs for homework assignments not on Canvas. Word is more professional.

You can download Microsoft Office for free at Instructional Resources at NJIT. Look for downloads. Don't download the entire Office suite; it will clog your computer.

AI Policy

For some but not all assignments, you may use AI; sometimes not at all, sometimes partially, sometimes for the complete assignment. I will try to make a notation beside each assignment for the amount of permissible AI.

Please keep in mind that the pedagogical reason for COM 313 is help you become fully competent in all professional modes of communication. The best way to achieve this is some mix of your realization of the context and the best way to present your message, your voice, and only then some assistance from an LLM.

Cite Chat and other AI Programs

If you use Chat GPT or other AI programs, cite them as you would any source you use in an assignment. The academic world is still evolving about how to use AI so there may be modifications.

Methods of Instruction

The class will use in-class writing tasks, lectures, group and individual review and revision.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will:	Job Application	Infographic	Ethics	2 Presentations	Sentence Writing Style, Tone	Peer Review	Writing Instructions	Summary	Proposal
Write and revise various types of professional technical communications to produce a set of technical documents demonstrating your ability to write clearly and accurately in a concise professional style.	x	x			x		x	x	x
Read and interpret material on technology and explain the ideas, issues, and problems involved in writing about technology and in workplace writing.		x		x			x	x	x
Demonstrate information literacy: the ability to formulate appropriate questions, find, select, assess, analyze	x	x	x	x				x	x

information sources, both print and electronic, from the open web and/or the NJIT Library, and to synthesize, credit, and integrate those sources in your own work.									
Develop collaborative work habits, including those necessary for effective cooperation with other students and instructors.		x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Identify your own strengths and weaknesses in writing.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

By the end of the course, you will be able to recognize and incorporate the elements of good writing and document design, able to write appropriately for various audiences, and have the elements of professional style in your writing.

You will be able to write in the correct formats a job application, professional memos and emails, short reports on various topics, compare ethics at NJIT and other universities, a proposal to improve NJIT (this one will be modified because of limited campus access), or a long report, concise summaries that are not merely condensations. Standard it

Course Requirements

There will be some writing weekly, both some short in-class assignments, and some homework. You can start many homework assignments in class. You will also give at least 2 presentations, usually 6-8 minutes. There will also be some short grammar lessons, as needed. The big assignment is a proposal or a report, 8 pages minimum, not including the cover sheet, the table of contents or the works cited section/page.

You may revise assignments that receive a letter grade once to improve the grade, provided the rewrite is handed in within a reasonable time, usually a week after receiving the corrected first draft. To raise the grade, the revision must be substantially your work, not correcting, for example, grammar errors the teacher has flagged.

Attendance Policy

Standard NJIT attendance policy allows 4 unexcused absences. Excused absences are the usual for religious holidays or illnesses or medical treatment documented with the Dean of Students. However too many absences even if they are excused will lead to a lower grade or not passing the class. Also excessive latenesses will affect your grade.

Your Evaluation:

- You will receive a letter grade for this class based on:
- Participation. This means not only attendance during class and punctuality but also the class activities such as taking part in discussions or other activities. 10%

- In-class analysis and in-class writing assignments. 20%
- Improvement in word choice and grammar, and addressing your writing issues, as noted in homework and in-class assignments 15%
- Homework assignments. 35%
- Presentations. 15%
- Improvement in professional writing including errors that make you appear unprofessional. 5%

The scale for converting the number grades in Canvas is based on the standards given by Canvas, but will be modified by factors not in Canvas such as participation and progress in language. If you want to know your status in class, ask me.

I will keep a separate grade sheet for activities that may not get a grade in Canvas, for example short discussions in class or in-class writings.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy found at:

< <http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf> >

Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu”

Students and the professor will be expected to follow the NJIT Academic Integrity Code. As for written work and for any quizzes or tests, papers copied from another source without proper documentation, or using unauthorized help, may fail the assignment, and for a major project such as a proposal, failing the course and being sent to a dean who will decide the case. Failing a class for cheating may result in an FX grade which can only be removed by completing an ethics workshop. For more information see the NJIT Academic Integrity Code. www.njit.edu/academics/integrity.php

BASIC SCHEDULE .011MODIFIED COM 313.011 Writing in the Workplace

There will be changes and inserts.

Tuesday and Thursday Classes

Week 1 Sept 2 & 4 Introductions and job applications **AI policy FOR the Resume Assignment: create your own then compare it to an AI generated version.** Use the 313/Career Services template – recommended – or an online template.

- Introductions. Introduce yourself. Format will be sent to you.
- Discuss resumes, cover letters, follow up letter assignment.
- Homework 1: Prepare a short talk on a company in your field that you would consider applying to. Requirements are on Canvas.
- Homework 2 Write a standard resume, requirements to be posted on Canvas.

NJIT Fall 2025 Career Fair

The Fall 2025 [Career Fair](#) will be held on Wednesday, September 17th from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM. [Fast Pass](#) attendees can enter at 11:30 AM.

Locations: Bloom Wellness and Events Center and Naimoli Tennis Center

In-person Register via Handshake. See the NJIT HR page for more information.

Week 2 Sept 9 & 11

- Discuss resumes
- Finish up: Presentations about employers from last week.
- Review punctuation rules.

Homework Due: Tu. Sept 9: Resume

Week 3 Sept 16 & 18

ETHICS To reinforce the seriousness of integrity in the workplace and NJIT

Read Ch 3. We'll discuss the chapter, any ethics cases you can think of, and do some exercises.

Assignment from the exercises. **AI policy Ethics: you can use Grammarly**

Review of 2nd draft of Resumes

Week 4 Sept 23 & 25

Ch 4 Achieving a Readable Style and Ch 6, Designing Illustrations

- In-class activity: What makes a good document?

▪ Short exercise on interest rates, connection with geometric, exponential, if any, financial literacy and other topics. You can use AI for the interest rates assignment
Short report topics assigned.

▶ Advance notice: Topics for Presentation 1 and requirements given. **AI policy: Don't use AI.** Use the Assertion Evidence style for this presentation.

Topic: A project or interesting topic at work or school Due Date: Week 6 Oct 7 & 9

Week 5 Sept 30 & Oct 2

Continue Ch 4 Achieving a Readable Style and Ch 6, Designing Illustrations

Continue, some in-class writing

Short report due

▶ Presentations Next Week!

Week 6 Oct 7 & 9 PRESENTATIONS

Make a good professional presentation. This includes content and delivery: good voice, stand straight, look at the audience and presenting, not reading.

Homework for Tuesday March 4: Read, discuss Ch 4, Achieving a Readable Style

Week 7 Oct 14 & 16 Style and Tone

Style and Tone. Discuss the sentences and how to improve your sentences.

Short Conferences

Proposal Assigned, Due in late November. Presentation and paper.

Follow the Professor's Format.

Week 8. Oct 21 Midterm, 23th To Be Announced

MIDTERM: an in-class writing, with some vocabulary, grammar and tone sections. 60-75 minutes

Week 9. Oct 28 & 30

Discuss instructions

Assignment: design a creation, write instructions. **AI policy: don't use AI**

Week 10. Tuesday Nov 4 & 6

Research to compare two countries as places to work in for a year.

Short written report and short presentation **AI policy: TBD**

Week 11. Nov 11 & 13 Review Ch 4 Readable Style, 5, Designing Documents.

Discuss Ch 9, Proposals. Review the requirements for your proposal. **AI policy for the proposal: Limited use**

Week 12. Nov 18 & 20 Summaries.

- Activities to be given in class

Week 13 Nov 25 Thursday Schedule Th 27 Thanksgiving

PRESENTATIONS on your proposal. Use the Affirm evidence method as much as possible

- Presentations on your proposals, one third of the class on each day.
- Due: LAST DAY to submit: Written form of Proposals or Reports! You will not get feedback and will lose points if you submit a first draft now. Work for 313.

Week 13 Dec 2 & 4 PRESENTATIONS

Complete presentations. Catch up. Sum up: what makes good professional writing.

Tour of Makerspace

Week 14. Tuesday Dec 9 TBA

Thursday December 11 Final Writing!

60 minutes of writing on a topic, grammar, tone, audience awareness vocabulary too.

■ ■ Tuesday Dec 9: Last Day to hand in APPROVED ONLY Late Work!

Thursday Dec 11: OUR LAST DAY! NO exam for us during EXAM period

Thursday dec 11: LAST DAY of CLASSES for NJIT.

Good Luck with Finals and Projects! Happy Holiday Break: do great things.